

R A N A P I P A.



CHARACTER GENERICUS.

Corpus tetrapodum, nudum, ecaudatum.

Lin. Syst. Nat. p. 354.

CHARACTER SPECIFICUS, &c.

RANA digitis anticis muticis quadridentatis, posticis unguiculatis.

Lin. Syst. Nat. p. 354.

Seb. Mus. 1. t. 77.

Mer. Sur. t. 59.

Vallisfn. Nat. 1. t. 41. f. 6.

Solent communes ranæ fœminæ ova sua in fossis et aquis stagnantibus, punctis mille nigris similia, glutine copioso contenta, primo vere deponere. Puncta hæc, ranarum futurarum veri embryones, elapsis paucis diebus, mole augentur, colore sunt minus fusco, e glutine circumfuso emergunt, et in aquis libere natant. Gyrinorum nomine nunc probe cognoscuntur, et corpore sunt prægrandi, sine ullis pedum vestigiis, cauda autem maxima pinniformi: ex utraque etiam parte thoracis apparent branchiæ ramosæ, seu organa respirationis. Elapso longo tempore, illisque nihil nisi magnitudine mutatis, branchiæ ramosæ decidunt, pedes anteriores e cute emergunt, et paulo post pedes

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posteriores.

posteriores. Vivit adhuc animal in aqua in qua primum nascebatur, cauda etiam remanente. Post aliquot tamen septimanas hæc quoque sensim decrefcens, tandem evanescit : jamque rana perfecta in terram progreditur, abhinc pro arbitrio vel in humo vel in aquis degens.

Talis est ranarum omnium Europæarum transformationis series (exceptis aliquot differentiis in figura et dispositione ovorum in variis speciebus). At vero in America Australi hujus generis est species, quæ inter omnia ludentis Naturæ miracula primum sibi locum videtur vindicare. Pullos enim more profus insolito e cellulis, seu concavis tuberculis in dorso fitis excludit. Differt igitur hæc ranæ species, utpote vivipara, ab omnibus sui generis, nec non ab aliis animalibus, insolito gestandi et parturiendi modo.

Surinamiam incolit rana hæc monstrosa. Color illi (saltem in speciminibus quæ ad nos pervenerunt) est plerumque plus minus fuscus, et interdum pene nigricans ; interdum multo pallidior. Animal est immodice deforme ; caput antica parte acuminatum gerens, rostro velut fuillo. Pedum anticorum digiti extremitates habent quadrifidas.

Affirmat CAMPER, vir anatomes peritissimus, Pipam uterum, seu ovarium internum habere, ovaque sua, eodem modo quo et alia hujus generis animalia, excludere ; et, si qua fides FERMINO, (qui se testem oculatum tam miræ rei fuisse asserit,) mas ova a foemina deposita pedibus congregat, dorsoque foeminæ imponit, quæ fecundata, intra cellulas dorsuales illa recipit, et occludit, donec paulatim perfectam ranæ formam adeptam, iterum excludantur.

Animal

Animal hoc tam fingulare unicum tantum partum edere voluit Natura, nec cum aliis fui generis speciebus collatum, fœcundum haberi potest; Pipa enim quam obſervavit FERMINUS, quinque diebus ſeptuaginta quinque pullos produxit.

THE
P I P A,
O R
T O A D O F S U R I N A M.



GENERIC CHARACTER.

Body four-footed, naked, without tail.

Lin. Syst. Nat.

SPECIFIC CHARACTER, &c.

FROG with the toes of the fore-feet quadrifid at their extremities; the hind-feet webbed and clawed.

Seba. vol. 1. t. 77.

Mer. Sur. t. 59.

The spawn of the common frog is deposited in large heaps or clusters by the females in stagnant shallow waters and ditches in the early part of the spring; it consists of a congeries of black globular points, surrounded with a considerable depth of gelatinous substance. The black points are no other than the real embryos of the future frogs; in a few days they enlarge, change to a somewhat lighter colour, and break through the surrounding gluten, and swim in the water



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ter. In this state they are well known by the name of tadpoles, and consist of a very large body, with no appearance of legs, but furnished with a very remarkable fin-shaped tail, and on each side the breast is a set of ramified branchiæ, or respiratory organs. After having lived for a considerable space in this state, with little other change of appearance than an increase of size, the ramified parts drop away, and the fore-legs appear; these are soon succeeded by the hinder ones, and the animal still continues to inhabit the water in which it was hatched; it is still furnished with the tail, which at this period of its growth makes a conspicuous appearance; but, after some weeks this also shortens by degrees, and the animal, having attained its perfect figure, ventures upon land, and from that time is at pleasure an inhabitant of either element.

Such is the change (with some few variations as to the figure and disposition of the spawn in the different species) which the animals of this genus undergo in all the kinds which belong to Europe; but in South America we have an instance in a species of this same genus, of one of the most extraordinary particularities which the whole compass of Natural History can exhibit: for in this animal, (which is called the Pipa, or Surinam Toad,) as if by a caprice of nature, unparalleled by any other known animal, and diametrically opposite to the established laws of production in other creatures, the young are produced, perfectly formed, out of cells, or hollow tubercles placed on the back of the female. This species therefore forms an exception

tion to the rest of the Frog-genus in being viviparous, and is likewise an exception to the general way of production in all other larger animals.

This most extraordinary creature is a native of Surinam. Its colour, (at least in such specimens as are brought over to Europe) varies considerably in different subjects; but it is generally brown, more or less deep, and in some, even approaches to blackness. It is a species of most striking deformity; the head is of a sort of pointed shape, the snout somewhat like that of a hog; and the toes of the fore-feet are at their extremities divided into four small processes.

I should not omit to observe, that according to the celebrated anatomist Camper, the Pipa is furnished with an internal uterus, or ovarium, and excludes its ova in the manner of other animals of this genus; and, from the observations of Fermin, (who declares he was an eye witness of the strange process,) it appears, that the male, after the exclusion of the ova, collects the whole heap, with his paws, and deposits it on the back of the female, where, (after impregnation) they are received into the cellules, which close over them, and in which they gradually arrive at their complete form, and are then again excluded.

This singular animal is calculated by nature for bearing young but once; and, compared with others of its genus, it cannot be regarded as very prolific; the number which the female Pipa, observed by Fermin produced, was seventy-five, which were all excluded in the space of five days.